



HEALTH  
DEPARTMENT  
*Caring today for a healthy tomorrow*

## HEALTH MATTERS

### From Kent County to Baltimore: Reflections on Race in our Country

By Adam London, RS, MPA



**Adam London, RS, MPA**

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- **Strategic Plan and Performance Management Reviews Underway**
- **A Closer Look at who is using the South Clinic Dental Program**
- **The Raising of America screening starts Conversations in Kent County Debut**

In late April, I spent a few days at a food safety conference in Baltimore, at the very same time the city was thrust into the headlines due to the Freddie Gray death. The image that the national media presented was largely that of African-Americans destroying the city. I think the reality was much more complex. While many African-American youths were involved, the reality was that adults of all races were united with one voice telling the kids to go home. I spoke with Baltimoreans of diverse backgrounds; I was deeply touched by African-Americans praying for the safety of the police officers, and Caucasians angry about the apparent cruelty shown to Freddie Gray.

The situation in Baltimore could have been much worse. Fortunately, African-American leaders have a strong, respected voice in Baltimore. The adults in Baltimore, regardless of race, were working together. It was apparent that the leaders within the community had pre-existing relationships and had earned a level of trust with each other. While the rioting was bad, the situation would have been infinitely worse without this integrated leadership steering the community back on track. These people included elected officials, veterans groups, business leaders,

Orioles players, Ray Lewis, pastors, fraternities, teachers, and many others.

Seeing Baltimore's situation up-close made me reflect on what we are doing in Kent County. We are on the right path with our Health Equity/Social Justice training, Raising of America, Health In All Policies initiative, REACH, and other interventions focused on the social determinants of health. A community's youth are a huge source of energy which can be focused for goodness if they have direction and access to essential needs. Our early childhood development programs and environmental improvements are key for helping to drive academic & health outcomes. These outcomes are key to directing the youth towards healthier more hopeful activities. And yet, there is so much more for each of us to do if we want to move our community forward.

The great English author, G.K. Chesterton, once observed, "America is the only nation in the world that was founded on a creed." That creed is, of course, the monumental belief spelled out in the Declaration of Independence that we are all created equal. Our nation has always struggled to live up to this principle, and sometimes it takes

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**HB 4209 :**

***Provides for state and local regulation of marihuana provisioning centers (medibles).*** Any law

requiring local regulation of medibles should include state funding for training health department employees on how to inspect sites, and the ability of health departments to levy a licensing fee for inspections/enforcement.

**SB 240, HB 4416:**

***Prohibits the sale, use of possession of powdered alcohol.*** The Kent County

Health Department supports efforts to ban this product in Michigan. KCHD is concerned this product will open the door to more underage drinking, drunk driving, and the potential for mixing the product with alcoholic beverages to create a "super-alcoholic" drink.

**SB 144:**

***Service establishments are exempt from inspection and managerial certification requirements serving low risk foods.*** KCHD supports

this law, which exempts places that serve "low risk foods" from inspections. These foods, such as cotton candy, commercially precooked hot dogs, brats, burgers, and popcorn, are often served at school sporting events.

# Headlines from The Capitol



*Adam London, KCHD Administrative Health Officer with Lt. Governor Brian Calley.*



*KCHD's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Karla Black receives NACCHO award from Swannie Jett, DrPH, MSc.*

## KCHD's Preparedness is Rewarded

April was a great month for the Kent County Health Department Emergency Preparedness Team.

KCHD was selected to receive the Jean Chabut Health Policy Champion Award in 2015 for the successful completion of the Project Public Health Ready certification. The award is a major part of the annual Public Health Week observance in Michigan. This award is presented to individuals and/or organizations that have made significant contributions toward the health and well-being of Michigan citizens in the policy arena at the local and/or state level. Adam London, Administrative Health Officer, received the award April 15 from Nick Lyons (head of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services) as well as State Rep. Rob VerHeulen, State Rep.

Chris Afendoulis, State Sen. Tonya Schuitmaker, and Lt. Governor Brian Calley.

KCHD's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Karla Black received the Project Public Health Ready award at the National Association for County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Public Health Preparedness Summit in Atlanta. Only seven health departments in Michigan were selected to receive the award for outstanding efforts in public health preparedness.

Public health preparedness activities address a broad spectrum of health-threats, including disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and other unusual events, and provides an organized, systematic blueprint for protecting the health of our community.

## South Clinic Dental Pulls Clients Throughout Kent County

By Paige Birkelbach, MPH

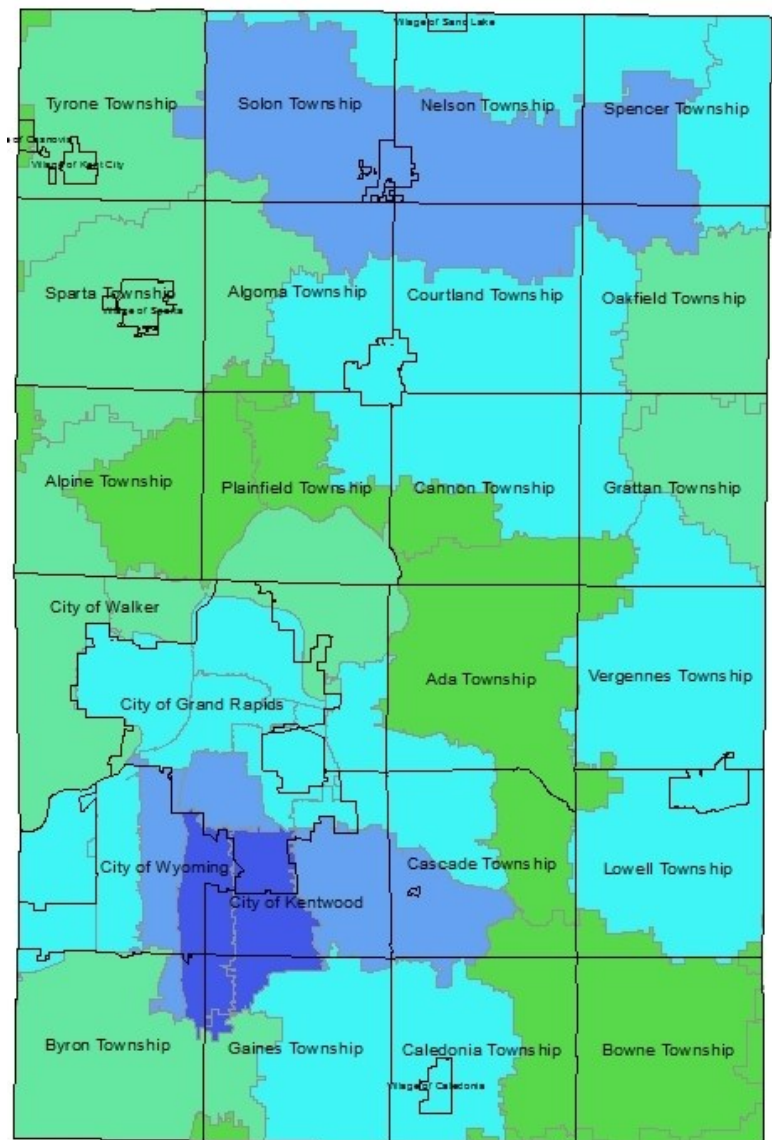
Since its grand opening in September 2014, the South Clinic, a partnership between the Kent County Health Department and Michigan Community Dental Clinic has been a rousing success. In a short seven months since opening its doors, the Dental Clinic has seen a total of 2,613 patients and provided 12,000 procedures.

The featured Kent County map demonstrates South Clinic Dental Clinic utilization rates by ZIP code from September 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015. During this time, most South Clinic Dental Clinic patients resided within the City of Wyoming and City of Kentwood. Also, a significant portion of Kent County patients travelled from the Cedar Springs area for dental care, an over 30 minute commute for services.

Patients receiving care were 40% male and 60% female, 42% were children and 58% were adults. The most common dental insurance among dental clinic patients were Medicaid recipients under the age of nineteen (37%) and Medicaid recipients twenty-one years of age and older (35%). Patients were typically between the ages of 31 to 60 years old.

The most common procedure to date performed by the Dental Clinic is a diagnostic exam (39.11%) followed by preventive procedures (20.10%), oral surgery cases (16.56%), and restorative procedures (12.02%). Almost 4% of all the dental procedures conducted by the 26 MCDC clinics throughout Michigan were provided at the Kent County Health Department South Clinic location.

### Kent County South Clinic Dental Clinic Utilization Rates by Zip Code of Patient September 1, 2014—March 31, 2015



#### Legend

#### Kent County Zip Codes COUNT as Percent of Total





## Raising of America Starts Community Conversations

Kent County Health Department hosted about 500 people at Celebration Cinema South on April 16, for screenings of "The Raising of America." The one hour sneak peek of an upcoming six part documentary series geared to change the conversation about how we educate our children. After the screenings, the Health Department and its partners facilitated a panel discussion, allowing audience members to comment and ask questions about education, health and local government. Included on the panel was Kent County Assistant Administrator Wayman Britt.

Check out reaction to the Kent County screenings at <http://goo.gl/PFQKVk>.



### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

- 1 Watch one of the online episodes at [www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org)
- 2 Like "The Raising of America – Kent County" on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/TheRaisingofAmerica](http://www.facebook.com/TheRaisingofAmerica))
- 3 Attend a Train the Trainer Workshop
- 4 Join us to launch a Kent County Health In All Policies Campaign
- 5 Host a screening, community conversation, or town hall meeting (more information at [www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org))
- 6 Volunteer or donate to support agencies that provide services for families with young children



#### EDUCATE.

Shift the discourse around early childhood

#### ORGANIZE.

Foster dialogue linked to action

#### ADVOCATE.

Grow public will to make Kent County one of the best places to raise children

## From Kent County to Baltimore

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generations to right our wrongs. The opportunity to move our little piece of America toward this vision lies within each of us. Seek to build partnerships within our

community with all of our neighbors, regardless of race. These relationships, and increased self-awareness, are the best medicine for curing the mistrust and segregation which keeps us from reaching our potential.

# Building Public Health Leaders

## Kent County Health Department expands Academic Health Department Program



Making sure our next generation of public health workers is ready for the workforce is critical for the health and well-being of us all. To make sure students are getting the experience they need for college credit, Kent County Health Department (KCHD) is expanding internship programs. Starting in mid-May, we will launch an online application process for fall semester interns (those working 100+ hours per semester) online. Students will have until June 15 to submit an application, along with other documents, in order to compete for a fall internship at KCHD. The goal of the expanded program is to be proactive and offer internships that benefit both the student & KCHD. We will be able to match applicants with specific projects and preceptors (intern trainers).

Each division (such as Community Wellness or Environmental Health) will determine their capacity and what projects they want interns to tackle. We have gifted, talented staff who have a wealth of experience from whom interns would benefit.

Public Health Program Supervisor Chelsey Chmelar is also working on developing the Public Health Boot Camp. This Boot Camp will present

the various aspects of public health and KCHD, giving students a greater understanding of the many programs offered. Whether they focus on vaccinations, restaurant safety, infant health or information technology, students today will be facing a variety of health concerns.

Implementing an Academic Health Department model will enhance the field of public health practice in Kent County by:

- Fostering mutually beneficial partnerships between universities and local public health to build a cadre of public health practitioners with formal public health education, faculty with public health practice experience, and graduates seeking employment in health departments.
- Equipping students and public health professionals with experiential learning opportunities to build their public health competency skills needed to meet local public health needs.

- Increasing the Health Department's ability to access additional resources and expertise necessary for assessing and responding to community health needs.
- Producing high quality community-based or applied public health research.
- Providing continued education and exposure to public health innovation for public health professionals in both academic and practice environments.

**To learn more about the program, go to:**  
**[www.accesskent.com/Health/hd\\_internship.htm](http://www.accesskent.com/Health/hd_internship.htm)**



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# Health Department Strategic Plan and Performance Management Update

By: Chelsey K. Chmelar, MPH

In 2012, the Health Department completed a comprehensive strategic planning process that resulted in the development of seven “strategic directions” and numerous goals, objectives, and strategies. Nearly three years into the five-year plan, significant changes in leadership, vision, and community health priorities have led the Health Department to recognize the importance of reevaluating the content of the existing strategic plan. Efforts to review and edit the strategic plan are intended to reflect and appropriately respond to previously mentioned changes in leadership, vision, and community health priorities.

KCHD has experienced change of staff in the Administrative Health Officer, Deputy Administrative Health Officer, Director of Environmental Health, and Director of Clinical Services positions. With such sweeping change in leadership, the vision for the future of the Health Department has shifted since the strategic plan was created and implemented, as well.

The Kent County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) process yielded an updated set of community health priorities in January 2015, which included:

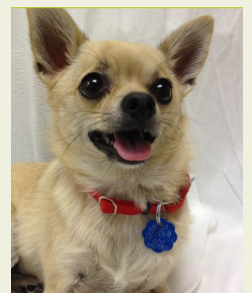
mental health issues, obesity and poor nutrition, substance abuse, and violence and safety issues. While some of these priorities overlap and/or are related to the priorities selected in the 2011-12 CHNA process, others are new. KCHD must determine what role it can play in collaborating with other community agencies to tackle these important issues. Once that role is defined, the actions and strategies will be incorporated into the strategic plan to ensure proper focus and resources are allocated accordingly.

Staff responsible for implementing strategic plan initiatives will come together in May to reassess current strategic plan goals, objectives, and strategies to ensure they align with the current and future direction of the Health Department and the vision held by the Health Department’s current leadership. They will also work to determine how and if the Health Department can assist community partners with addressing the four key community health priorities. Recommendations resulting from this working session will be finalized and shared with the Community Health Advisory Council for final approval. We will keep you updated on these changes.

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[www.twitter.com/kchd](http://www.twitter.com/kchd)



## IT’S THE LAW!!!

A dog license helps to get your dog home safe if they become lost. All dogs 4 months and older must have a license in the county where they reside. Owners of unlicensed dogs could face a hefty fine.

**Get your dog license online:**  
[www.accessKent.com/kcas](http://www.accessKent.com/kcas)



# Kent County Health Department

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter.

The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids.



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## Mission Statement

To serve,  
protect and  
promote a  
healthy  
community for  
all.